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WESTERN INFORMATION OFFICE: San Francisco, Calif.

Technical information: (415) 625-2270 BLSinfoSF@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/west

Media contact: (415) 625-2270

Consumer Price Index, Alaska area – December 2019

Area prices were down 0.5 percent over the past two months, unchanged 0.0 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Anchorage area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), decreased 0.5 percent for the two months ending in December 2019, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the December decrease was influenced by lower prices for new vehicles and education and communication. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bi-monthly changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U were unchanged. The index for all items less food and energy decreased 0.4 percent over the year. Food prices rose 2.2 percent. Energy prices advanced 0.6 percent, largely the result of an increase in the price of natural gas service. (See [table 1.](#))

Food

Food prices were unchanged for the two months ending in December. (See [table 1.](#)) Prices for both food at home and food away from home were unchanged for the same period.

Over the year, food prices rose 2.2 percent. Prices for food away from home rose 3.7 percent since a year ago, and prices for food at home rose 1.1 percent.

Energy

The energy index decreased 0.8 percent for the two months ending in December. The decrease was mainly due to lower prices for gasoline (-1.5 percent). Prices for electricity and natural gas service were both unchanged from two months ago.

Energy prices advanced 0.6 percent over the year, largely due to higher prices for natural gas service (5.3 percent). Prices for electricity decreased 0.8 percent, and prices paid for gasoline inched down 0.2 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy decreased 0.5 percent in the latest two-month period. Lower prices for apparel (-3.4 percent) and education and communication (-1.3 percent) were partially offset by higher prices for household furnishings and operations (2.1 percent) and medical care (0.8 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy decreased 0.4 percent. Components contributing to the decrease included apparel (-4.0 percent), shelter (-1.3 percent), and recreation (-1.2 percent). Partly offsetting the decreases were price increases in medical care (4.7 percent) and other goods and services (3.3 percent).

The December 2019 Consumer Price Index for the Anchorage area is scheduled to be released on January 14, 2020.

Consumer Price Index Geographic Revision for 2018

In January 2018, BLS introduced a new geographic area sample for the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This index changed to a bimonthly publication schedule beginning in February, 2018. Additional information on the geographic revision is available at: www.bls.gov/cpi/additional-resources/geographic-revision-2018.htm.

Historical data, including semiannual and annual averages, are available at: www.bls.gov/cpi/data.htm

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 89 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 28 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 87 urban areas across the country from about 6,000 housing units and approximately 24,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the *BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index*, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch17_a.htm.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In

addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.

The Urban Alaska area covered in this release consists of Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna Borough in the State of Alaska.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Urban Alaska (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Oct. 2019	Nov. 2019	Dec. 2019	Dec. 2018	Oct. 2019	Nov. 2019
Expenditure category						
All items	227.552	-	226.527	0.0	-0.5	-
All items (1967=100)	607.367	-	604.633	-	-	-
Food and beverages	216.673	-	216.444	2.1	-0.1	-
Food	222.343	-	222.266	2.2	0.0	-
Food at home	214.477	214.926	214.390	1.1	0.0	-0.2
Cereals and bakery products	227.795	-	227.741	7.5	0.0	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	196.159	-	199.793	-0.2	1.9	-
Dairy and related products	210.809	-	205.880	4.2	-2.3	-
Fruits and vegetables	338.397	-	336.725	3.4	-0.5	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)	149.170	-	147.453	-3.5	-1.2	-
Other food at home	175.072	-	175.554	-2.2	0.3	-
Food away from home	232.445	-	232.381	3.7	0.0	-
Alcoholic beverages	159.562	-	158.065	0.8	-0.9	-
Housing	205.984	-	206.020	-0.7	0.0	-
Shelter	204.584	204.914	204.161	-1.3	-0.2	-0.4
Rent of primary residence(2)	199.771	199.888	198.473	-2.6	-0.6	-0.7
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(2)	205.927	206.422	205.857	-0.3	0.0	-0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(2)	205.927	206.422	205.857	-0.3	0.0	-0.3
Fuels and utilities	360.437	-	360.488	2.4	0.0	-
Household energy	379.384	379.271	379.256	1.4	0.0	0.0
Energy services	422.871	422.871	422.871	1.5	0.0	0.0
Electricity	373.728	373.728	373.728	-0.8	0.0	0.0
Utility (piped) gas service	483.350	483.350	483.350	5.3	0.0	0.0
Household furnishings and operations	128.620	-	131.335	0.9	2.1	-
Apparel	155.878	-	150.610	-4.0	-3.4	-
Transportation	225.017	-	221.517	-1.2	-1.6	-
Private transportation	235.303	-	231.099	-1.6	-1.8	-
New and used motor vehicles(3)	-	-	109.313	-	-	-
New vehicles(1)	-	-	246.367	-	-	-
Used cars and trucks(1)	259.331	-	255.478	-1.5	-1.5	-
Motor fuel	246.542	252.268	242.916	-0.2	-1.5	-3.7
Gasoline (all types)	247.496	253.034	243.669	-0.2	-1.5	-3.7
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4)	238.220	243.750	234.358	-1.0	-1.6	-3.9
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5)	238.323	243.764	236.199	1.6	-0.9	-3.1
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4)	254.099	258.550	250.937	3.6	-1.2	-2.9
Motor vehicle insurance(1)	926.761	-	895.661	-11.1	-3.4	-
Medical care	625.275	-	630.543	4.7	0.8	-
Recreation(3)	129.878	-	128.981	-1.2	-0.7	-
Education and communication(3)	115.361	-	113.834	-0.4	-1.3	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1) ..	748.486	-	-	-	-	-
Other goods and services	361.859	-	365.348	3.3	1.0	-
Commodity and service group						
All items	227.552	-	226.527	0.0	-0.5	-
Commodities	184.448	-	182.804	0.0	-0.9	-
Commodities less food & beverages	167.630	-	165.428	-1.1	-1.3	-
Nondurables less food & beverages	215.767	-	211.982	-1.1	-1.8	-
Durables	-	-	125.924	-1.1	-	-
Services	264.640	-	264.179	0.0	-0.2	-

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Urban Alaska (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Oct. 2019	Nov. 2019	Dec. 2019	Dec. 2018	Oct. 2019	Nov. 2019
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	213.741	-	212.558	-0.4	-0.6	-
All items less shelter.....	237.128	-	235.795	0.6	-0.6	-
Commodities less food	167.666	-	165.489	-1.0	-1.3	-
Nondurables	216.706	-	214.783	0.6	-0.9	-
Nondurables less food.....	211.850	-	208.273	-0.9	-1.7	-
Services less rent of shelter(2).....	363.629	-	363.128	1.3	-0.1	-
Services less medical care services.....	243.765	-	243.026	-0.6	-0.3	-
Energy	302.799	306.314	300.495	0.6	-0.8	-1.9
All items less energy	223.475	-	222.530	-0.1	-0.4	-
All items less food and energy	224.052	-	222.969	-0.4	-0.5	-

Footnotes

(1) Indexes on a December 1978=100 base.

(2) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

- Data not available

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.